

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EUR-08

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AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
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S E C R E T MOSCOW 17434

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SUBJECT: GARBA VISIT TO MOSCOW PROVES A SHOCK TO NIGERIANS

REF: MOSCOW 17308

SUMMARY: NIGERIAN EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR TELLS
US DURING GARBA-GROMYKO TALKS LATTER PRESSED HARD
BUT UNSUCCESSFULLY FOR NIGERIAN CONDEMNATION OF
SOMALIAN INVASION OF OGADEN; WARNED OF "THE MOST
SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES" IF SOMALIS PERSIST (WHICH GARBA
TOOK TO MEAN EITHER INCREASED MILITARY SHIPMENTS OR
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MORE CUBANS AND POSSIBLY EVEN SOVIET MILITARY PER-
SONNEL FOR ETHIOPIA); CRITICIZED ANGLO-AMERICAN
RHODESIAN PLAN; AND EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF SENDING
ARMS TO ARAB STATES THAT SUPPORT SOVIET LINE. END
SUMMARY.

1. NIGERIAN EMBASSY POLITICAL COUNSELOR OTUOKON

GAVE EMBOFF A BRIEFING ON VISIT TO MOSCOW OF
NIGERIAN COMMISSIONER EXTERNAL AFFAIRS GARBA. THE
FOLLOWING POINTS FROM HIS BRIEFING WERE OF PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE:

2. --VISIT COULD BE DESCRIBED AS SUCCESSFUL, BUT DIFFICULT, WITH
EMPHASIS ON LATTER. MAJOR PROBLEM WAS SITUATION IN HORN. SOVIETS
PRESSED VERY HARD IN TRYING TO OBTAIN NIGERIAN CONDEMNATION OF
SOMALI INVASION OF OGADEN BOTH IN PRIVATE AND IN COMMUNIQUE ON VISIT
AND WERE OPENLY IRRITATED AT NIGERIAN REFUSAL. GROMYKO USED ARGUMENT
OF
SOVIET SUPPORT FOR NIGERIAN TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND NIGERIAN
POLICY TOWARD ANGOLA, BUT GARBA COUNTERED WITH ARGUMENT THAT
NIGERIA AS CHAIRMAN OF EIGHT NATION OAU COMMISSION ON PROBLEM COULD
NOT TAKE PARTISAN POSITION. GROMYKO SHOWED GREAT DEPTH OF FEELING
OVER SOMALI ACTIONS AND SAID HE DID NOT THINK PEACEFUL SOLUTION OF
OGADEN DISPUTE COULD BE ACHIEVED PRIOR TO "BLOODLETTING." HE ASKED
GARBA TO TELL SIAD THAT IF SOMALIA DID NOT QUIETLY BEGIN TO
WITHDRAW FROM THEOGADEN, IT WOULD HAVE TO BEAR THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR
"THE MOST SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES IN THE NEAREST FUTURE." GARBA LATER
TOLD HIS COLLEAGUES HE FELT THIS MEANT ONE OF TWO THINGS, AN
INCREASE IN BLOC MILITARY SHIPMENTS TO ETHIOPIA OR AN "INTERVENTION"
IN THE STUATION REPRESENTED BY AN INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF CUBAN OR,
POSSIBLY, EVEN SOVIET MILITARY PERSONNEL IN ETHIOPIA.

3. DISCUSSION ON SITUATION IN SOUTHER AFRICA
CENTERED ON ZIMBABWE. NIGERIANS WERE TAKEN ABACK BY GROMYKO'S
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BLUNT FISHING FOR INFORMATION ON REASONS FOR NKOMO'S SAPU FIGHERS
SITTING ON THEIR HANDS WHILE MUGABE'S ZANU FORCES WERE ENGAGED IN ACT
ION.
NIGERIANS WERE NOT PREPARED TO CARRY ON DISCUSSION ALONG THESE LINES
AND SUCCEEDED IN CUTTING THIS PART OF CONVERSATION SHORT. FROMYKO
HAD TIME, NONETHELESS, TO CRITICIZE THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PLAN FOR
RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT IN SIMPLISTIC, PROPAGANDISTIC TERMS
("IMPRIALIST" TRICK TO PRESERVE PRIVILEGES IN ZIMBABWE, ETC) TO
WHICH GARBA REPLIED THAT NIGERIANS WERE NOT 100 PERCENT SATISFIED WIT
H
PLAN, BUT AT LEAST THOUGHT IT SHOULD BE GIVEN A CHANCE. IN HIS
NOV 28 LUNCHEON REMARKS, GARBA ALSO MADE FQVORABLE
REFERENCE TO PRESIDENT CARTER AND HIS POLICY INITIATIVES IN SOUTHERN
AFRICA. THESE REMARKS WERE EDITED OUT OF TASS SUMMARY REPORTED REFTEL
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4. DISCUSSION ALSO TOUCHED ON ME. NIGHERIANS
WERE UPSET OVER SOVIET EMPHASIS ON IMPORTANCE OF SENDING ARMS TO
ARAB COUNTRIES WHICH FOLLOWED POLICY LINES WHICH MOSCOW APPROVED.

5. GARBA WAS ACCOMPANIED BY ACTING NIGERIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER IN LOND
ON

NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR TO
TANZANIA AND THEADS OF FON OFFICE EUROPEAN AND AFRICAN DEPARTMENTS.
BILATERAL MATTERS WERE TOUCHED ON ONLY IN PASSING.
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